



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
District of New Hampshire*

*Federal Building
55 Pleasant Street, Room 312
Concord, New Hampshire 03301*

603/225-1552

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Contact: Thomas P. Colantuono
United States Attorney
Mark A. Irish
Clyde R. W. Garrigan
Assistant U.S. Attorney's
(603) 225-1552

LAWRENCE MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO COCAINE TRAFFICKING
CONSPIRACY

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE: United States Attorney Tom Colantuono, Drug Enforcement Administration Resident Agent in Charge Leo Ducey, and Manchester Police Chief John Jaskolka, announced today that, Cesar Perez, age 24, of Lawrence, Massachusetts pled guilty today in United States District Court to conspiracy to distribute 5 kilograms or more of cocaine.

Perez was one of nine defendants charged in an indictment and a superseding indictment returned by a U.S. District Court Grand Jury sitting in Concord in April 2003.

Judge Steven McAuliffe ordered a sentencing hearing to be held on January 27, 2004. Perez is being detained pending sentencing.

In commenting on the plea, U.S. Attorney Colantuono stated: "This conviction is the result of a two year investigation conducted by local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. Among other things, the agencies used sophisticated investigative techniques, which resulted in the shut down of a cocaine distribution ring which imported multi kilogram quantities of cocaine into New Hampshire for years. In turn, the organization supplied dealers throughout the state. It is an important victory each time one of these drug dealers is found guilty."

This case was investigated by the New Hampshire State Police Narcotics Investigation Unit, the Manchester, NH Police Department and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney's Mark A. Irish and Clyde R.W. Garrigan.